

Date: May 18, 2005
Time: 5:15 p.m.
Place: Krysiak House Restaurant
1605 Michigan Avenue, Bay City MI 48708

Members Present:

Dennis Curtis	Lyle LeCronier	Ray VanDreissche
Philip Engelhardt	Michelle Lesniak	Chris Wazny
Kari Gulvas	Delicia Newman	Barb Wishowski
George Heron	Douglas Rise	
Robert Kernstock	Elaine Sobieray	

Others Present:

Ann Arnold, FCS Extension Educator
John Burk, ANR Extension Educator
Judy Delestowicz, Administrative Assistant
Jan Rise, Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator
Jodi Schulz, 4-H Youth Development Extension Educator
Howard Wetters, County Extension Director

INFORMATION PRESENTED AND DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

Before dinner, Howie Wetters, CED, started the evening out with an ice breaker to give Council members a chance to meet each other. After dinner, Chair Doug Rise brought the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. After the minutes of the April 27, 2005, meeting were approved, Howie Wetters gave a PowerPoint presentation on how MSU Extension is funded and how those dollars are spent. In addition to how MSUE overall is funded, Mr. Wetters provided an overview of general budget information specific to MSU Extension Bay County. This budget information provided insight on current levels of funding for programs and staffing and how that has changed or remained "flat" over the last few years. Bay is one of the 5 out of the 13 counties in the East Central Region that still has a full compliment of agents (Extension educators) covering all program areas: agriculture and natural resources (ANR), family nutrition program (FNP), youth development (4-H), and community and economic development. In addition to support from campus and regional staff, Mr. Wetters showed how Bay County's appropriation to MSU Extension supports staff, equipment, and space here at the local level. While over the last two years, MSUE Bay County has lost one Family and Consumer Science (FCS) Extension educator position in 2004 and part of the funding for the ANR Extension educator position in 2005, there have been no lay offs. Mr. Wetters concluded that even with current cuts to the 2005 Bay County budget, relative to the ANR Extension educator position, he is confident that monies lost in funding can be found to reinstate the FTE (fulltime equivalent), due to an anticipated budget surplus caused by additional grant funding. There was some Council discussion on finding other available local dollars to supplement the budget in the future.

Mr. Wetters then asked each Extension educator to recap current, on-going projects in their project area so Council can better understand the role of MSU Extension Bay County in the community, with the hope of identifying new program priorities.

John Burk, ANR Extension educator is currently working on and/or with:

- Variety plot testing: soybeans, dry beans
- Pesticide certification and crop update program(s)
- Manure management
- Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)
- Groundwater Stewardship program (abandoned wells, pesticide pick up programs)
- Ag in the classroom, annual fifth grade farm tour
- Farm Women's Symposium
- Ag field work
- Soil health workshop (includes, tillage) and farm safety program(s)

Mr. Burk noted that ANR programs have a direct impact to area farmers by bringing up farm income when information is shared at the local level, as in the case of area results identified in a recent pesticide management survey relative to the soybean cyst nematode. Some discussion focused on additional ANR programming to consider implementing in future. Council identified the following:

- Educating the community on agriculture issues. MSUE could play a role in creating an arena for community involvement between agriculture and non-agriculture families/groups to better understand each other.
- Focus on developing/enlarging on an agriculture youth leadership advocacy program. Noting that 4-H is already a youth leadership development program and the Future Farmers of America (FFA) in Pinconning is the only group in the area, which is facilitated out of Bay Arenac ISD's Agri-Science department.

Jodi Schulz, 4-H Youth Development Extension educator, introduced herself to Council, as she was unable to meet with them in April due to a previous MSU Extension commitment. Ms. Schulz stated that she and the 4-H program assistant work with a large volunteer base of 4-H families. She noted that 4-H programming is summarized two parts: traditional and non-traditional. 4-H Youth Development staff is currently working on and/or with the following focus areas under traditional programming:

- Currently providing services to 27 active 4-H clubs and 3 volunteer advisory council groups: 4-H, livestock, and horse. This includes facilitating and participating in many new on-going 4-H club activities, award banquets, and fund-raising events throughout the program year.
- Coordinates all 4-H events held during the annual Bay County Fair, which includes marketing, competition, and auction.

Non-traditional programming include:

- Provide in-school and after school literacy and character educational programming, using VISTA and AmeriCorps.

- Provide in-school and after school nutrition educational programming, working with MSU Extension FNP staff.

A blend of both traditional and non-traditional programming:

- Proud Equestrian Program (PEP), formerly known as Horsemanship for Handicappers (HFH), which currently has 23 youth members and 50 volunteers.

Ms. Schulz said all traditional programs are necessary, and that youth leadership is already a large part of the 4-H program. High school 4-Hers choose to use volunteer hours earned during fair and other 4-H events under the new community service hours credit requirement for graduation. Some discussion centered on how 4-H is marketed in the community. Ms. Schulz stated that whenever they are in or work with the schools, every opportunity is used to get 4-H information to parents. Letter writing to teachers about MSU Extension program delivery and direct presentations about 4-H in the schools are other marketing methods. Bay County Fair Board, Bay County Farm Bureau, and MSU Extension Bay County are teaming up to create an agriculture week at fair this year. Project RED (Rural Education Days) will be held the Thursday of fair week, coinciding with the livestock auction, and will focus on educating the public about agriculture and commodities. Council identified the following as additional and continuing marketing avenues, funding sources, and collaborators:

- Marketing 4-H and MSU Extension youth programming under community service outreach. One way is being involved in community initiatives that focus on youth development. Parent Connect may be an opportunity for additional marketing. Students United group could be a future collaborator.
- Develop a community youth expo, possibly at fair.
- Bay Area Community Foundation may have money available through a youth initiative grant.

Ann Arnold, Family Consumer Sciences Extension educator, highlighted the several programs she and four program associates are working on or with:

- Food and Nutrition Program (FNP) nutrition lessons such as food safety, food budgeting, and making good food choices are delivered directly in-home and in group forums. Group forums include schools, senior centers, and community organizations or groups. For example, presentations delivered through Head Start have nutrition information also going home with kids to the parents.
- Project FRESH is a program whereby WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) participants are given nutrition education and coupons for shopping at markets to purchase Michigan grown produce.
- Breastfeeding Initiative (BFI) works with new mothers to educate, instruct, and promote breastfeeding. This program has been so successful in recent years, that one FTE breastfeeding peer counselor was able to be added to staff.
- Better Kid Care (BKC) and Building Strong Families (BSF) are MSU Extension educational parent enrichment programs delivered in-home or in group forums. BKC provides certification for in-home day care providers, with the goal of receiving a state operator's license. The Relative Care program, under BKC, provides day

care instruction to family members like grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. BSF programming helps in child development, discipline, and goal setting.

- Parent Connect program provides assessment and outreach to community services and support for families in six identified schools in Bay and Arenac Counties. Parent Connect looks to build strength between a child's family and school, with the goal to improve a child's academic achievement through parent involvement.

Mr. Wetters noted that this (FCS) is the largest program area within MSU Extension Bay County. All these programs are fully grant funded from a variety of local, state, and federal sources. Some discussion was had on the need for more day cares in the community. BKC programming does more than certify participants, Mr. Wetters explained, it provides access to child care development for non-traditional families in a traditional home center, which then become educated, qualified day care providers. Ms. Arnold and Mr. Wetters also explained about community service provider collaborations, including the direct relationship with Successful Futures, how referrals are made, and how gaps in service are identified.

In addition to administrative tasks as county Extension director, Mr. Wetters' program area is community and economic development. He is currently working on or with:

- Conflict resolution and facilitation with community focus groups or planning teams. These groups look for MSU Extension's reputation as a neutral, unbiased entity to help them identify issues and solve conflicts. Several groups recently facilitated or worked with were Monitor DDA (Downtown Development Authority), Saginaw River dredging project, and the successful day treatment program now housed at the Bay County Juvenile Home.
- Participation with local emergency service providers (LPT) in training and funding allocation, like the small pox simulation in June, under the Citizens Corp CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) program.

After some discussion, Council identified these efforts to consider:

- Market MSU Extension programs in community and promotion of its educational component to bring the vast, various programs to the public.
- Pursue grant funding to aid in the marketing and promotion of MSU Extension at the local level.

Jan Rise, Master Gardener Volunteer Program coordinator, noted that home horticulture is one of the most enjoyable programs under MSU Extension. There is a high demand for classes. Ms. Rise is looking at starting up a Junior Master Gardener Volunteer Program in Bay County. She highlighted some new and on-going programming efforts:

- Master Gardener core curriculum classes.
- Continuing education programs. Example: on-line gardening classes.
- Advanced education classes. Example: field expert speakers and programs
- Community garden projects.
- In-office plant and insect identification.

A telephone hotline was established in 2002 to field home horticulture calls serviced by Master Gardener volunteers. Ms. Rise was successful in bringing an well-known landscape designer to the Bay County gardening public to deliver a series of classes on ornamental landscaping, with the end result of becoming certified in this area.

Chair Doug Rise opened the discussion on reviewing Council by-laws. Mr. Rise felt that the by-laws look good, but could be “beefed up” under the purpose section and the language under the absentee section. He encouraged comments back to him or Ray VanDreissche. Any by-laws updates will be acted upon over several different meetings before being approved.

Meeting dates for the remainder of 2005 were set as being held on the third Wednesday of each month and identified as: July 21, September 15, and November 17. All meetings are to be held at the MSU Extension Bay County office at 5:15 p.m.

ACTION TAKEN

- It was moved, supported, and carried to approve the meeting minutes of April 27, 2005, with correction (typo).
- It was moved, supported, and carried to adjourn at 8 p.m.

WHAT’S NEXT AND FOLLOW UP

1. Bylaws review committee report (Executive Board)
2. Establish local program goals and priority setting
3. Bay County Fair and 4-H Livestock Auction information
4. Sign up for MSU and/or MSUE newsletters

Next meeting scheduled for **Thursday, July 21, 2005**, at the same time, 5:15 p.m., at MSU Extension Bay County, 3rd Floor, Bay County Building, 515 Center Avenue, Bay City, Michigan.

Prepared by J. Delestowicz